

Amendment dated May 23, 2005
Office Action dated 02/22/05

Application No. 10/021,917

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method of determining~~ An apparatus that determines allocations in a business operation to maximize profit on a computer system, comprising:

a memory; and

a processor that accesses the memory to retrieve computer-executable instructions to perform:

collecting profit data for a plurality of classes in the business operation, each class including an allocation having a cost function, and each allocation belonging to the group consisting of physical allocations and economic allocations;

determining profit functions for the allocations from the profit data by:

determining demand distributions for the allocations from the profit data; and

determining each profit function from a corresponding demand distribution;

formulating a Multiple Choice Knapsack Problem to maximize profit from the profit functions, the cost functions, and a cost constraint; and

solving the Multiple Choice Knapsack Problem to determine values for the allocations.

2. **Cancelled**

3. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 2 1, wherein each demand distribution includes a Poisson model.

4. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 2 1, wherein each demand distribution includes a Markov model.

5. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 2 1, wherein each demand distribution includes a normal distribution model.

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6. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the allocations include spatial allotments.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the allocations include monetary allotments.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the cost constraint is a greater-than-or-equal-to inequality constraint.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the cost constraint is an equality constraint.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the cost constraint is a less-than-or-equal-to inequality constraint.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A method of~~ An apparatus that determines ~~determining~~ physical allocations in a business operation to maximize profit on a computer system, comprising:

a memory; and

a processor that accesses the memory to retrieve computer-executable instructions to perform:

collecting profit data for a plurality of classes in the business operation, each class including a physical allocation having a cost function;

determining profit functions for the physical allocations from the profit data by:

determining demand distributions for the allocations from the profit data; and

determining each profit function from a corresponding demand distribution;

formulating a Multiple-Choice Knapsack Problem to maximize profit from the profit functions, the cost functions, and a cost constraint; and

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solving the Multiple Choice Knapsack Problem to determine values for the physical allocations.

12. **Cancelled**

13. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim ~~12~~ 11, wherein each demand distribution includes a Poisson model.

14. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim ~~12~~ 11, wherein each demand distribution includes a Markov model.

15. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim ~~12~~ 11, wherein each demand distribution includes a normal distribution model.

16. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the physical allocations include spatial allotments for the classes.

17. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the spatial allotments include widths for the classes and the cost constraint is a width constraint.

18. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the spatial allotments include advertising spaces for the classes and the cost constraint is an advertising space constraint.

19. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the spatial allotments include catalog spaces for the classes and the cost constraint is a catalog space constraint.

20. **(Currently Amended)** ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the spatial allotments include floor spaces for the classes and the cost constraint is a floor space constraint.

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21. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the cost constraint is a greater-than-or-equal-to inequality constraint.

22. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the cost constraint is an equality constraint.

23. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the cost constraint is a less-than-or-equal-to inequality constraint.

24. (Currently Amended) ~~A method of determining~~ An apparatus that determines economic allocations in a business operation to maximize profit on a computer system, comprising:

a memory; and

a processor that accesses the memory to retrieve computer-executable instructions to perform:

collecting profit data for a plurality of classes in the business operation, each class including an economic allocation having a cost function;

determining profit functions for the economic allocations from the profit data by:

determining demand distributions for the allocations from the profit data; and

determining each profit function from a corresponding demand distribution;

formulating a Multiple Choice Knapsack Problem to maximize profit from the profit functions, the cost functions, and a cost constraint; and

solving the Multiple Choice Knapsack Problem to determine values for the economic allocations.

25. Cancelled

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26. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim ~~25~~ 24, wherein each demand distribution includes a Poisson model.

27. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim ~~25~~ 24, wherein each demand distribution includes a Markov model.

28. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim ~~25~~ 24, wherein each demand distribution includes a normal distribution model.

29. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the economic allocations include monetary allotments for the classes.

30. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the cost constraint is a monetary constraint.

31. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the cost constraint is a greater-than-or-equal-to inequality constraint.

32. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the cost constraint is an equality constraint.

33. (Currently Amended) ~~A method~~ The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the cost constraint is a less-than-or-equal-to inequality constraint.

34. (Currently Amended) A system for determining allocations in a business operation to maximize profit, comprising:

a data unit, the data unit having a memory that includes profit data for a plurality of classes in the business operation, each class including an allocation having a cost function that is stored in the memory, and the memory also including a cost constraint;

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a profit-model unit, the profit-model unit being connected to the data unit, and the profit-model unit including executable instructions for determining profit functions for the allocations from the profit data, wherein determining the profit functions includes:

determining demand distributions for the allocations from the profit data; and

determining each profit function from a corresponding demand distribution; and

an optimization-engine-unit, the optimization-engine unit being connected to the data unit and the profit-model unit, the optimization-engine unit including executable instructions for formulating a Multiple Choice Knapsack Problem to maximize profit from the profit functions, the cost functions, and the cost constraint, and for solving the Multiple Choice Knapsack Problem to determine values for the allocations.

35. Canceled

36. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim ~~35~~ 34, wherein each demand distribution includes a Poisson model.

37. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim ~~35~~ 34, wherein each demand distribution includes a Markov model.

38. (Currently Amended) A system according to claim ~~35~~ 34, wherein each demand distribution includes a normal distribution model.

39. (Original) A system according to claim 34, wherein the allocations include spatial allocations.

40. (Original) A system according to claim 34, wherein the allocations include economic allocations.

41. (Original) A system according to claim 34, wherein the cost constraint is a greater-than-or-equal-to inequality constraint.

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42. **(Original)** A system according to claim 34, wherein the cost constraint is an equality constraint.

43. **(Original)** A system according to claim 34, wherein the cost constraint is a less-than-or-equal-to inequality constraint.

44. **(Currently Amended)** Computer-readable media tangibly embodying a program for determining allocations in a business operation to maximize profit, the program including executable instructions for:

collecting profit data for a plurality of classes in the business operation, each class including an allocation having a cost function;

determining profit functions for the allocations from the profit data by:

determining demand distributions for the allocations from the profit data; and

determining each profit function from a corresponding demand distribution;

formulating a Multiple Choice Knapsack Problem to maximize profit from the profit functions, the cost functions, and a cost constraint; and

solving the Multiple Choice Knapsack Problem to determine values for the allocations.

45. **Cancelled**

46. **(Currently Amended)** Computer-readable media as claimed in claim 45 44, wherein each demand distribution includes a Poisson model.

47. **(Currently Amended)** Computer-readable media as claimed in claim 45 44, wherein each demand distribution includes a Markov model.

48. **(Currently Amended)** Computer-readable media as claimed in claim 45 44, wherein each demand distribution includes a normal distribution model.

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49. **(Original)** Computer-readable media as claimed in claim 44, wherein the allocations include physical allocations.

50. **(Original)** Computer-readable media as claimed in claim 44, wherein the allocations include economic allocations.

51. **(Original)** Computer-readable media as claimed in claim 44, wherein the cost constraint is a greater-than-or-equal-to inequality constraint.

52. **(Original)** Computer-readable media as claimed in claim 44, wherein the cost constraint is an equality constraint.

53. **(Original)** Computer-readable media as claimed in claim 44, wherein the cost constraint is a less-than-or-equal-to inequality constraint.

54. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 2 1, wherein determining demand distributions for the allocations from the profit data comprises:

modeling the demand distributions with corresponding probabilistic functions.